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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/773,490	02/02/2001	Manfred Dombek	31512-168231	6657

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EXAMINER

LOPEZ, CARLOS N

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
1731	13

DATE MAILED: 02/21/2003

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)	
	09/773,490	DOMBEK, MANFRED	
	Examiner	Art Unit	
	Carlos Lopez	1731	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on 13 December 2002.
- 2a) This action is FINAL. 2b) This action is non-final.
- 3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) Claim(s) 12-15 and 17-28 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) Claim(s) 12-15, 17-23, 27 and 28 is/are rejected.
- 7) Claim(s) 24-26 is/are objected to.
- 8) Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.
 Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- 11) The proposed drawing correction filed on _____ is: a) approved b) disapproved by the Examiner.
 If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.
- 12) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

- 13) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) All b) Some * c) None of:
1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 14) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).
 a) The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
- 15) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s) _____ . |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| 3) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) 9 . | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ . |

DETAILED ACTION

After further consideration of the amendment filed on 12/13/02 in view of the conferences held on Dec. 6 and 12, 2002, a rejection of the pending claims follows.

Claim Objections

Claim 17 objected to under 37 CFR 1.75(c), as being of improper dependent form for failing to further limit the subject matter of a previous claim. Applicant is required to cancel the claim(s), or amend the claim(s) to place the claim(s) in proper dependent form, or rewrite the claim(s) in independent form. Claim 17 is dependent on cancelled claim 16.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

Claims 15, 20 and 23 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention. It is unclear how a portion of a channel would partially overlap another portion of the channel as recited in claim 15. In claim 20, "said at least one surface" and "said other surface" lacks antecedent basis. In claim 23, "said one section from said channel" lacks antecedent basis.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

- (e) the invention was described in-
- (1) an application for patent, published under section 122(b), by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent, except that an international application filed under the treaty defined in section 351(a) shall have the effect under this subsection of a national application published under section 122(b) only if the international application designating the United States was published under Article 21(2)(a) of such treaty in the English language; or
- (2) a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent, except that a patent shall not be deemed filed in the United States for the purposes of this subsection based on the filing of an international application filed under the treaty defined in section 351(a).

Claims 12-15, 17-22 rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Dombek et al (US 6,363,942). Dombek et al disclose a perforating apparatus for changing the permeability of cigarette wrapper (Abstract). The apparatus comprises a rolling unit having a channel defined by movable first surface (24) and a second stationery flat surface (26), means for feeding (rolling drum 20) into the inlet of the channel a series of products (16) and means for changing the permeability of the cigarette wrappers (laser beam 2).

As for claim 17, elements 24 and 24' provides a window by which the permeability of the wrappers is changed.

As for claim 18, figure 9 shows to endless belts as being rolling surfaces.

As for claim 20, first surface 24 is endless.

As for claim 22, the endless spaced apart sections are those sections of the rolling belt around the pulleys of belt 24 as shown in figure 1.

As for claim 27, it is inherent the rotary conveyor (20) would includes means to remove (gravity) and fill its flutes in order to perforated successive cigarettes

The applied reference has a common assignee with the instant application.

Based upon the earlier effective U.S. filing date of the reference, it constitutes prior art under 35 U.S.C. 102(e). This rejection under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) might be overcome

either by a showing under 37 CFR 1.132 that any invention disclosed but not claimed in the reference was derived from the inventor of this application and is thus not the invention "by another," or by an appropriate showing under 37 CFR 1.131.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negatived by the manner in which the invention was made.

2) Claims 28 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Dombek et al (US 6,363,942) as applied to claims 12, and 27 above, and further in view of Schur (US 2,952,105). Claim 28 additionally defines the expelling means of the rotary conveyor as pushers in a radially direction of the rotary conveyor. Schur teaches of an ejector bar having a radial movement in relation to a rotary conveyor as suitable means for ejecting filter tip sections from the flutes of a rotary conveyor (Column 2, lines70-72). At the time the invention was made it would have been obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art to have included ejector bars at the flutes 22 of the rotary conveyor 20 of Dombek in order to eject tobacco products from the flutes to a second conveyor as taught by Schur.

Allowable Subject Matter

The indicated allowability of claims 18 and 19 is withdrawn in view of the newly discovered reference(s) to Dombek et al (US 6,363,942). Rejections based on the newly cited reference(s) are given above.

Claim 23 would be allowable if rewritten to overcome the rejection(s) under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, set forth in this Office action and to include all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Claims 24-26 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

The following is a statement of reasons for the indication of allowable subject matter: The cited prior art does not disclose or reasonably suggest a cigarette rolling apparatus having means for changing the permeability of wrapper having a first portion of a channel defined by two endless bands, a second portion of the channel defined by a stationary rolling member, and a flat stationary rolling surface as recited in claim 23. Nor does the cited prior art disclose or reasonably suggest a cigarette rolling apparatus having means for changing the permeability of wrapper, a flat stationary rolling surface, and three endless bands as recited in claims 24-26.

Response to Arguments

Applicant's arguments with respect to claims 12-15 and 17-28 have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection.

Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Carlos Lopez whose telephone number is (703) 605-1174. The examiner can normally be reached on Mon.-Fri. 8am - 5pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Steven Griffin can be reached on (703) 308-1164. The fax phone numbers for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned are (703) 305-7718 for regular communications and (703) 305-3599 for After Final communications.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is (703) 308-0651.


STEVEN P. GRIFFIN
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER
TECHNOLOGY CENTER 1700

C.L
February 14, 2003